

REMARKS

According to the Office Action, claims 1-19 and 113-120 stand withdrawn.

Claims 20, 58, 62, 70, 72, 80, 95, 97, 99, and 121 are currently amended. Previously added claims 62 and 121 have been amended to delete the word “configuration” which had been inadvertently included in these claims. Claims 1-19, 54-57, 92, 96, 98, 106, 108, and 110-120 have been cancelled.

Rejections under 35 § U.S.C. 102.

According to the Office Action, claims 20-22, 24, 37-40, 51, 70, 74, 75, 78 and 95 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,217,460 to Knoepfler.

Additionally, claims 20-24, 26, 37-40, 45, 51-56, 70, 73-75, 78, 80-82, 85, 86, 89, 94-97, and 99 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,096,037 to Mulier et al.

Regarding claims 20-57, Applicants have amended independent claim 20 to include the claim limitations of claim 57 and all intervening claims. Claim 57 was indicated in the last office action to be an allowable claim. According, claim 20 and all claims dependent on claim 20 are now believed to be allowable.

Regarding claims 70-79, Applicants have amended independent claim 70 to include the claim limitations of claim 71. Claim 71 was indicated in the last office action to be an allowable claim. According, claim 70 and all claims dependent on claim 70 are now believed to be allowable.

Regarding claims 80-94, Applicants have amended independent claim 80 to include the claim limitations of claim 92. Claim 92 was indicated in the last office action to be an allowable claim. According, claim 80 and all claims dependent on claim 80 are now believed to be allowable.

Applicants have amended independent claim 95 to include the claim limitations of claim 98 and all intervening claims. Claim 98 was indicated in the last office action to be an allowable claim. According, claim 95 and all claims dependent on claim 95 are now believed to be allowable.

Based on the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections based on the Knoepfler and Mulier patents are requested.

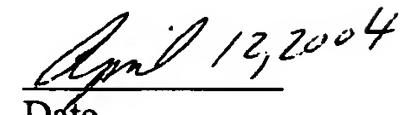
IN CLOSING

Applicants believe they have responded to all issues raised in the outstanding office action. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, a telephone call to the undersigned attorney at the below listed number will be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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